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Registered charity no. 219099

## News - Laying hens: barren battery cage ban upheld

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10.01.08

### The RSPCA welcomes today's European Commission decision to uphold the ban on conventional battery cages but warns that the alternative - so-called 'enriched' cages - are little better.

Following a review of the Directive, the Commission announced today that conventional battery cages will be banned from 2012, despite some industry groups calling for a postponement. The report takes into account the demands of consumers and states that the welfare problems associated with conventional cages are inherent to the system.

However, many people don't realise that when the ban comes into force, eggs labelled 'eggs from caged hens' will still be available, produced in so-called 'enriched' cages and the RSPCA is renewing its campaign to get them out of cages once and for all.

#### All cages should be banned

Alice Clark, an RSPCA farm animal scientist, said: "Enriched cages are little better than the notorious battery cages. Little will change from the hens' point of view, so we are calling on the Government to ban all cages and are urging consumers not to buy eggs produced from them, especially as eggs are widely available from higher welfare barn and free-range systems.

"Channel 4's food season has made chickens a hot topic at the moment. But we don't want shoppers to think that when the ban comes into force there will be no more caged eggs on the supermarket shelves. In fact, they may simply come from hens kept in a different type of cage.

"Currently, some 37 per cent of eggs produced in the UK come from birds reared to higher welfare standards in cage-free systems. That's a heartening statistic especially as demand for these eggs has grown so rapidly over the last decade. Now we are asking all consumers to continue to support better welfare for hens by not buying eggs that come from any kind of cage."

#### Basic welfare needs still not met

While the RSPCA considers 'enriched' cages to be a small step forward compared with conventional barren battery cages, they still don't adequately meet even some of the most basic welfare needs of the birds. This includes not enough room to spread their wings properly or sufficient facilities to dustbathe effectively, leading to frustration and distress.

Eggs bearing the Freedom Food logo come from birds that are reared on farms inspected to RSPCA welfare standards and are free to move around in barn or free-range systems. The RSPCA's standards do not allow any type of battery cage - conventional or enriched.

- To find out more about caged hens and where you can buy Freedom Food higher welfare products, [please click here](#)

- Support our Laying Hens campaign. [Click here](#) to see how you can help.

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#### YPA is back...and it's online

20.06.08 The RSPCA Young Photographer Awards (YPA) is back and bigger and better than ever before with its own fantastic new website.

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#### Give as you spend

20.06.08 With the launch of the new RSPCA Visa Credit Card, you can raise money for the charity at no extra cost to you and benefit from outstanding rates.

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#### Curfew order for Appleby dog deaths

19.06.08 A man has been given a curfew order for causing two dogs to suffer unnecessarily after leaving them in a hot car at this year's Appleby Horse Fair.

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#### RSPCA Council election results

19.06.08 Following the recent national elections to the Society's Council, members have now been elected to serve for the next three years.

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#### National Equine Welfare Protocol launched

19.06.08 A National Equine Welfare Protocol, which has been developed by representatives from various organisations with an interest in equine welfare, has been launched.

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#### Four arrested in dog-fighting raids

18.06.08 Four people were arrested and four pit bull-type dogs seized during a series of co-ordinated raids across the Midlands and north-east England.

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#### CDs help fledglings learn to sing

16.06.08 Baby birds in the care of RSPCA wildlife centres are for the first time being played recordings of the dawn chorus to help them learn to sing.

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#### MBE honour for RSPCA Chief Inspector

14.06.08 RSPCA Chief Inspector Lee Hopgood is to be awarded an MBE in the Queen's birthday honours this year for his outstanding services to animal welfare.

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#### Monty now living the high life

13.06.08 It was Monty the Staffie's imploring eyes that first grabbed the attention of Jenny Wallace during her search for the perfect pet.

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#### Dog deaths at Appleby Horse Fair

12.06.08 The RSPCA is disappointed after the deaths of two dogs and three other incidents where dogs had to be rescued from hot cars at Appleby Horse Fair.

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